

## LEVEL 1 - 2 OF 95 STORIES

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February 6, 1993, Saturday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE B1; DOROTHY GILLIAM

LENGTH: 758 words

HEADLINE: Blacks Must Roll Up Their Political Sleeves

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: DOROTHY GILLIAM

BODY:

In this town, everyone is elated over the number of black appointees in the Clinton administration. But now is the time to make them work for African Americans.

Those appointees must assume a double burden. For while they were chosen for sterling qualities that supersede race, they also were chosen to balance out the racial diversity of the president's team. That means a special accountability to African Americans.

Too often, blacks don't hold black appointed officials accountable (or elected ones either, for that matter).

"The black community rolled over and played dead for 12 years," one black Bush appointee told me. "That's a big mistake."

Over the last two decades, for example, key Republican leaders made a covenant with black Republicans in which they promised economic development, black capitalism and entrepreneurship for African Americans. Republicans later broke that pledge and wiped out many programs.

What helped make their reneging possible? The silence of blacks.

But, you say, blacks didn't expect anything from Republicans because of their anti-civil rights policies. Right. But there's more to this problem than that.

The African American community as a whole is still a relative novice at U.S. politics. It's only been in the last 30 years that blacks have held important government jobs. While some African Americans still are learning about how the appointment process works, others sometimes get mesmerized by just having black appointees in positions and tend to celebrate the position itself.

Historically, blacks have shied away from exerting pressure on black appointees out of a desire not to embarrass the appointee before whites.

This made it easy for an ambitious appointee -- viewing his or her showcase job as a stepping stone and enjoying the glamour and prestige -- to get into a "don't make waves" mindset. This translates into not raising issues critical to the African American community.

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Thus, many black appointees can look powerful while actually they are caught in a trap of tokenism. That trap consists of being loyal to the boss and getting ahead, on one hand, yet feeling a sense of responsibility to advance equal rights, on the other.

To turn this around, the African American community must not sit back and trust "the process." It has to exert pressure on appointees and elected officials, and hold them accountable on the issues seriously bedeviling the black community.

I'm not talking about accountability for a black agenda that is counter to a national agenda, but about making certain that the national agenda is inclusive of the interests of African Americans.

Outside pressure actually helps black appointees; it forces them to reflect that pressure back to the White House or the Cabinet secretary. Keeping African American community needs and concerns front and center helps appointees avoid being trapped in the tokenism zone.

The Clinton administration is particularly open to feedback. Strong public pressure is the reason he abandoned Zoe E. Baird who was up for attorney general, and the reason he backed off tampering with social security. And his willingness to go to the mat to repeal the ban on homosexuals in the military is in response to gay votes, mobilization and pressure.

Even though Clinton could not have won without the overwhelming support of blacks, so far he's already fired two shots that have angered many. One was his decision to temporarily maintain the Bush administration policy of summarily returning Haitians picked up at sea. Another is his Republican-like steps to "end welfare as we know it" by pushing people from the rolls after two years. Many blacks believe the real answer is to provide employment opportunities and affordable health and child care, not to set arbitrary cutoff dates.

If African Americans want to effect change in problems that disproportionately plague their community -- unemployment, little economic development and poor education and housing, to name a few -- they are going to have to be diligent and watchful.

Certainly, pressure can be exerted through churches, organizations and regular leadership channels. But individuals also must take the activist, outspoken approach of writing, telephoning and faxing the White House, Congress and federal agencies.

Republicans got away scot-free because blacks assumed they wouldn't do the right thing. It would be a shame if the Democrats got away scot-free because blacks assume they will do the right thing.

Without pressure? I don't think so.

TYPE: COLUMN

SUBJECT: BLACKS; APPOINTED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS; POLITICS

## LEVEL 1 - 4 OF 95 STORIES

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January 30, 1993, Saturday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE B1; DOROTHY GILLIAM

LENGTH: 682 words

HEADLINE: A Universal Benchmark

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: DOROTHY GILLIAM

BODY:

Too rarely does an American institution recognize an African American as an authority on matters that affect all our lives. More often, his or her perspective is sought on issues related to blacks: civil rights and race.

So when a District resident called me early this week upset about the "diminishing" of the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, I knew what he was talking about.

He was referring to those stories that, while well-displayed or prominently aired -- maybe even well-intentioned -- still described the great jurist primarily in terms of his contribution to African Americans.

Explosively, the caller railed: "He was so much more than that!"

Indeed, he was. Thurgood Marshall never saw a right he didn't vindicate -- whether it was for women, gays, prisoners. A fierce proponent of individual rights, he supported anyone who was oppressed, disadvantaged or downtrodden, ultimately transforming the way the law operated for them.

Even when he fought to extend equal rights to African Americans, to make the promises of equal protection a living reality, Marshall defined the rights of citizenship for all Americans. Indeed, to some blacks, the narrow descriptions of Marshall felt almost like a racial put-down.

By midweek, Marshall began to get his just due as more thoughtful commentators were heard from and their appreciation of the broadness of his views emerged.

At his impressive funeral on Thursday, an audience that included President Clinton, the 12 living sitting and retired justices and thousands of people of all races and stations gave Marshall a monumental expression of appreciation. Most important, he began to receive the context, perspective and historical significance that he deserved.

Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist noted that Marshall wrote more than 300 major opinions, and he called him an advocate of "civil rights for minorities and civil liberties for all."

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Referring to the inscription on the Supreme Court building, "Equal Justice Under Law," he said, "Surely no one individual did more to make these words a reality than Thurgood Marshall."

Former secretary of transportation William T. Coleman Jr. noted Marshall's legal revolution, much of which "had nothing to do with race," with regard to women's rights, forced confession, improper police practice, right to privacy and habeas corpus.

Putting Marshall on a par with Abraham Lincoln, he said Marshall "gave cloth and linen to the work that at Abraham Lincoln's death was left undone."

In her reference to Marshall's "vision of law as an agent of social change," former Marshall law clerk Karen Hastie Williams touched on another unique and rarely mentioned Marshall contribution: an approach to law in which it is used as an instrument of justice and transformation.

Building on the legacy of Charles Houston, his teacher at the Howard University School of Law and NAACP partner, Marshall furthered this notion of solving social problems using the law and it formed the basis for many of the other transformations of laws that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s.

It's important to note Marshall's contributions to the whole of America, because he, like all blacks, is connected to the whole.

It is when people are able to view others as separate and apart that it becomes easier to dehumanize them and ignore the issues that affect them, and to be numb or blind to what happens to them and how that ultimately affects everyone.

Thurgood Marshall understood that fact, and he used his legal brilliance to make "equal justice under the law" more nearly a reality for all.

At his funeral, they bade us to live his legacy. "I hope that the nation has the will and moral courage to finish these two giants' [Lincoln and Marshall] unfinished business," Coleman said.

One important part of that legacy is to rid ourselves of the notions that African Americans have limits on what they can contribute to America, that their scholarship and abilities are measured by the color of their skin and not by the depth of their minds, courage, grace and fortitude.

TYPE: COLUMN

SUBJECT: JUDGES; FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

NAMED-PERSONS: THURGOOD MARSHALL

## LEVEL 1 - 5 OF 95 STORIES

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January 23, 1993, Saturday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE C1; DOROTHY GILLIAM

LENGTH: 702 words

HEADLINE: A Toast To America's Stately Host

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: Dorothy Gilliam

BODY:

Washington, you did good.

You can be proud of the way you handled President Clinton's inaugural spectacular -- the biggest inauguration celebration in the country's history.

You worked hard at being a good host during the four-day celebration in which an estimated 800,000 showed up for Wednesday's swearing-in and parade, and 70,000 to 80,000 attended balls.

You surprised a lot of people who claimed you were violent and frightening -- the nation's "murder capital." During the year I lived in New York, some people would shake their heads and fear would appear in their eyes when I told them I was from Washington.

Now, hundreds of thousands of people will go home with the image of the Washington we know.

I saw numerous courtesies: volunteers wearing "D.C. Host" buttons patiently giving tourists Metro routes, walking patterns, the names of low-cost restaurants.

Unlike what President Kennedy once said -- that we are "a city of Northern charm and Southern efficiency" -- we showed we can be a town of significant charm and efficiency.

The Department of Public Works quickly cleaned up the parade route. The efficiency of Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly's office, which provided overall coordination, was remarkable to even some of our residents. The Metro, which labored under a major burden, proved almost up to the task.

Even the criminals took a holiday.

D.C. police said they marveled at the small number of serious offenses during Inauguration Week. Three homicides were reported between Friday, Jan. 15 and Inauguration Day -- considered a low number by police.

"It's been amazing how smoothly things have run," D.C. police Capt. Sonya T. Proctor said on Wednesday. Proctor heads the unit that assists the Secret Service with presidential security. "Everybody seems to be caught up in what's

The Washington Post, January 23, 1993

happening. There have been no problems."

One police sergeant, noting the slowdown in crime, said: "It makes you wish we could have something like this every week."

Those who came in with fear and trepidation went home knowing that, during the entire week, there were fewer crimes here than in many of their home towns.

One person who's lived in New York, Los Angeles and Washington remarked on the professionalism of our police officers, who do not have the arrogance she associates with Los Angeles police or the sarcasm of New York cops.

The credit for such a smooth show goes to national officials as well as local ones such as Sam Jordan, deputy director of the city's Office of Emergency Preparedness. A veteran of seven inaugurations, he oversaw logistics for the District Inaugural Committee and coordinated activities of city agencies with federal ones.

"Jordan's institutional memory was very valuable to us, so we did not do things improperly," said Debbie Wilhite, director of events for the inauguration. "The city adjusted well to our vision of the inaugural and helped us pull off some pretty remarkable logistical feats throughout the week."

But Jordan is only one of the many city and federal employees and representative groups -- such as the Washington Committee (made up of people from the city's public and private sectors) -- who put out a welcoming hand to the rest of the country.

At one ball, the D.C.-N.Y. Inaugural Ball at the D.C. Armory, the atmosphere was definitely congratulatory, with District folks gracefully taking the credit heaped on them by the New York celebrants.

If there were ever any doubts that the District of Columbia is a major-league town entitled to statehood, they had to be softened by the city's performance this week.

Part of the goodwill undoubtedly came from so many residents who are convinced that Clinton and the Democratic-controlled Congress will indeed make good on their promise of statehood for the District. Here and there throughout the parade, and even the balls, one could spot the buttons that said "D.C. Statehood Now" or just "51."

There was a reason those buttons were worn so prominently this week. The president is moving fast on some of his promises. One promise we expect him to move on is statehood.

I've never been more proud of the District as a host city.

Next time around, I want us to be a host state.

GRAPHIC: SYMBOL

TYPE: COLUMN

The Washington Post, January 23, 1993

SUBJECT: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; INAUGURATION; U.S. PRESIDENT

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## LEVEL 1 - 7 OF 95 STORIES

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January 16, 1993, Saturday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE B1; DOROTHY GILLIAM

LENGTH: 777 words

HEADLINE: The Dream Is Falling On Deaf Ears

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: DOROTHY GILLIAM

BODY:

Who, to so many of our deeply troubled youth, is Martin Luther King Jr.?

The answers, from some, rip my heart:

"He is history." "Malcolm X means more because we identify with his anger."  
"He's a passive dreamer."

I protest!

This man -- whose message can still move me to tears, whose courage impelled my generation to heroic action -- was no passive dreamer. Hear King throwing down the gauntlet to violently segregated America:

Let us make our intentions clear. We must and we will be free. We want freedom now. We do not want freedom fed to us in teaspoons over another 150 years.

These are not empty words. This young generation that neither fears death nor loves life, to whom a rebuff or perceived slight is just cause to take a life, needs to hear them. Yet nonviolence appears meaningless to the far too many young black men in Washington and Baltimore who are in the criminal justice system.

Listen to Don Marks, a 21-year-old federal employee, speak about the meaning King holds to some members of his generation: "His purpose is lost. They feel we already have our freedom. . . . All they worry about today is making money and surviving. The message of King's nonviolence is being lost because they don't understand it."

It is time to translate and re-teach King's message to meet the needs of such a lost population.

We live in a period where changes are taking place and there is still the voice crying through the vista of time saying, 'Behold, I make all things new, former things are passed away.'

"These are very complex times," said Al Freeman Jr., head of Howard University's theater arts department and the actor who played Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad in "Malcolm X."



The Washington Post, January 16, 1993

"I'm not sure these young people deal in concepts and abstract ideas. They want something immediately. They want it now. Some of the rhetoric no longer applies," he said. "They are impatient. They turn on themselves."

Freeman, who read movingly from King's speeches on Monday at the Kennedy Center, added: "I'm thinking we have to call some people home; some people who marched with Martin and now are very comfortable and don't see the need for change. Have they turned their backs on some of the issues that still beset our communities? Where are they? It seems to me our young people need some leadership."

King was a man who was willing to stand up for, even die for, his beliefs. The "Malcolm X" film delivers the message that people can change behavior and make themselves more useful to others.

Both aspects require a commitment to a different lifestyle, said civil rights leader Jesse L. Jackson. To make that point, Jackson went to Cardozo High School on Wednesday to appeal to young people. He told them that black-on-black crime is a greater threat than the Ku Klux Klan. And if they want to follow Martin and Malcolm, he said, they must pledge not to make babies and take no responsibility for them, not to pick up guns, not to sell drugs.

Jackson said many students committed themselves to a different lifestyle. He later took the same message to Lorton prison and the D.C. jail.

But Marks, one of scores of young people who picketed the National Rifle Association yesterday in honor of King, isn't sure such pledges will be effective with troubled young people.

"They are going to have to want to change. So many are addicted to money, the glamour of hustling. Add to that the power that having a gun gives them. Just having a gun heightens a person's ego . . . he pulls out a gun and he automatically gets respect. He hasn't tried doing the right thing and the respect that comes from that automatically. He wants to go the easiest way."

But perhaps the biggest hurdle is that many young people don't see the job opportunities and access that King's dream envisioned.

When young people grow up in war zones with friends being slain, body bags and constant gunfire, in neighborhoods where there are more liquor stores than grocery stores, where guns are cheap and easily available, it's easy to see why King's dream can seem irrelevant to them.

"Something has to be done to make young people here realize that things will be better," Marks said. "But it's going to take a long while, a lot of hard work on the part of everybody."

If the spiral of despair -- homicides, drugs, lost economic and educational opportunities -- is ever to be slowed, if King's dream is ever to be fulfilled, we had better start now.

Once again, it is King who reminds us why we need to act:

We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.

The Washington Post, January 16, 1993

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, THE REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

TYPE: COLUMN

SUBJECT: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY; BLACKS; CIVIL RIGHTS

NAMED-PERSONS: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## LEVEL 1 - 8 OF 95 STORIES

Copyright 1992 The Washington Post  
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December 26, 1992, Saturday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE B1; DOROTHY GILLIAM

LENGTH: 625 words

HEADLINE: Reclaiming A Holy Image

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: DOROTHY GILLIAM

BODY:

On the wall of the Rev. Wallace Charles Smith's church study is a painting of a Jesus with dark skin, African features and woolly hair.

God called his son out of Egypt, which is an African country, explained the pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in the District. "It's absurd to think he had long, flowing blond hair and blue eyes."

For many theologians, historians and Christians of all races, this is not a blasphemous distortion of history.

In a multicultural age when feminists and people of color are challenging old concepts, blacks want to reestablish Africa and her descendants as centers of value. They want to do this, they say, without demeaning other people's contributions to world civilization.

"By modern Western standards, the earliest biblical people would have to be classified as blacks," said Cain Hope Felder, professor of New Testament language and literature at the Howard University School of Divinity.

Felder said new studies of ancient iconography and of the importance of Egyptian and Ethiopian civilizations in the shaping of the biblical world are providing substantive challenges to many notions, including that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was European.

"Most white scholars would have to admit that Jesus is a person of color," said Felder, author of "Troubling Biblical Waters," which stresses the Bible's multiculturalism. "This does not mean that He was from the Congo, but that He had African blood."

Everette Goodwin, pastor of predominantly white First Baptist Church in the District, said it is difficult for white people to accept an image of Jesus as a person of color.

"Every freckle-faced kid grows up thinking Jesus looks Anglo-Saxon. He may get to the point to say He looks Semitic. But it gets tough to say He was more black or more Asian. Since there are no photographs, all of the above are possible, but it's difficult."

The Washington Post, December 26, 1992

To say Jesus was Semitic, or Jewish, does not dispute his blackness, Felder said. "The term, which was not even invented until the 19th century, refers not to a racial type, but to a family of languages, including both Hebrew and Ethiopic," he said.

How, then, did Jesus become whiter over the years?

Black scholars note that the increasingly white depiction of Jesus began when medieval and Renaissance artists chose to represent biblical characters in ways favorable to people of European descent. Hollywood's "The Greatest Story Ever Told" and "The Robe" further etched those images in stone.

Increasing numbers of black churches, both traditional and nontraditional, have begun to incorporate African biblical images into their worship and imagery.

"We don't make a big fuss," said Smith, of Shiloh. "We hold up positive Afrocentric images and help people understand geography. And reasonable people will begin making up their own minds."

Bishop George A. Stallings -- who three years ago broke from the Vatican and founded Imani Temple, a Catholic congregation with an emphasis on African culture -- recently announced a nationwide campaign to promote the use of black images of Jesus in black churches.

"We are talking about the issue of power and the way religion has used a white Jesus to keep a people subservient and oppressed by subliminally conveying the message that the God of Salvation is white," Stallings said.

Image is power. How empowering it would be for African American children to know that Jesus was of their same blood and stock. And how much tolerance white children could learn by understanding that a Jesus who did not look like them had wisdom for all the world to share.

And if there's anything we should know this Christmas season, it is that His message of love, forgiveness and tolerance should be lifted up, not distorted.

TYPE: COLUMN

SUBJECT: RELIGION; BLACKS

NAMED-PERSONS: CAIN HOPE FELDER